

SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
AMMERMAN CAMPUS, SELDEN, NY
ALUMNI ROOM, BROOKHAVEN GYMNASIUM
JANUARY 16, 2025

The meeting was held on Thursday, January 16, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. in the Alumni room of the Brookhaven Gymnasium, in Selden, NY.

PRESENT:

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| Shirley Coverdale | Chair |
| Gordon Canary | Vice Chair |
| Gemma deLeon-Lopresti | Vice Chair |
| Kevin O'Connor | Secretary |
| E. Christopher Murray | Trustee |
| Jerome Bost | Trustee (<i>via zoom – voting</i>) |
| Priscilla Zarate | Trustee (<i>via zoom – nonvoting</i>) |
| Dominic Hardy | Student Trustee |
| Dr. Edward Bonahue | President |
| Ashley Pope | General Counsel |
| Mary Lou Araneo | V.P. for Institutional Advancement |
| Shady Azzam-Gomez | V.P. for Information Technology Services |
| Dr. Patty Munsch | V.P. for Student Affairs |
| Dr. Irene Rios | Interim V.P. for Academic Affairs |
| Kaliah Greene | V.P. Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness |
| Angelica Rivera | V.P. for Human Resources |
| Sara Gorton | Interim V.P. of Business and Financial Affairs |

The meeting of the Board of Trustees was convened at 9:00 a.m.

Chair Coverdale asked Carol Wickliffe-Campbell for the recognition of guests. Ms. Wickliffe-Campbell introduced Legislator Bontempi, Legislator Mazzarella and Nick DeBello, from AME.

Public comments on agenda items: none.

Chair Coverdale requested a motion to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2024 Board of Trustees meeting. Trustee deLeon-Lopresti so moved, Trustee O'Connor seconded. The motion to approve the minutes was approved unanimously (6-0).

Chair Coverdale then introduced Interim V.P. of Business and Financial Affairs, Sara Gorton, to present the College's financial reports. In regards to FY'24, the financial audit is in progress, the report should be issued sometime in February or March, and will be presented for the board's approval. The College does not anticipate any issues with the audit report.

In regards to FY' 25, the College is four months into the year. Fall semester tuition and fees revenue ended up about a half a percent under budget about \$250K. Winter session finished strong with almost 9% over budget, about \$100K. Revenue for the Spring semester is looking strong, full-time revenue is tracking about 4% over budget and tracking close to budget, about 1% up for part-time revenue. The College is also seeing increases in our base fees and course related fees due to increases in enrollment. The College makes these projections based on registration activity in past semesters which is usually a reliable indicator. Although it is a couple of weeks before the semester starts, the College is comfortable that these projected increases as well as revenue from facilities usage and interest income reflect an increase of about \$2.5M over budget for total revenue. Ms. Gorton said it was important to highlight all the work that's being done around the College to increase enrollment, retention, persistence, and after seeing many semesters of declines due to COVID, it's great to acknowledge the successes.

For FY'25 expenditures, Ms. Gorton reported full time salaries are tracking close to budget. However, because the College is adding capacity due to enrollment increases and course demands, the cost of overload go up a bit. Other costs that make the budget more difficult to manage, are employee benefits. The College has little, if any control, over benefits, and the rising pension costs. The College is anticipating about a \$1M over what was initially budgeted. EMHP premium costs increased by 12.9%, starting January 1, 2025, over \$3M in additional costs from January through August. Although the College had budgeted about 3.5% of an increase, it is still behind in costs.

The type of expenses that the College has control over are (OTPS) Other Than Personal Expenses, those are coming in under budget by \$1.4M. Total projected expenditures are \$3M over budget. The College will continue to work to bring this number down, and is also in communication with its sponsors, and hopefully get some favorable partnerships with them to mitigate some of the expenses.

In regards to FY'26, the College is starting the budget process. They will be meeting with Executive Deans and Vice Presidents over the next several weeks to create the budget for FY'26. The New York State Governor's Executive Budget should be released

next week. SUNY has once again requested floor funding for community colleges, and she does not anticipate any increase in base funding. However, NYS has proposed an increase in additional funding they gave this year for special programs. This year's allocation across community colleges was \$8M for nursing and mental health initiatives, of which the College received \$329K. SUNY has requested to increase those funds to \$30M this year. However, they haven't specified how they will disseminate them.

(Trustee Murray arrived)

President Bonahue provided an overview of College Resolutions 2025.01 to 2025.07. Chair Coverdale called for approval of College Resolutions No. 2025.01 through 2025.07. Trustee Canary so moved, Trustee Murray seconded. The motion to approve College Resolutions No. 2025.01 through 2025.07 was approved unanimously (7-0).

RESOLUTION NO. 2025.01 – Excused Absence by a Member of the Board of Trustees

WHEREAS, Trustee Jerome Bost was unable to attend the December 5, 2024 meeting of Suffolk County Community College's Board of Trustees due to personal circumstances described in more detail to the Board Chairperson; and

WHEREAS, Trustee Bost has requested that such absence be designated by the Board of Trustees as an excused absence, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that Trustee Bost's absence at the December 5, 2024 Board of Trustees meeting is an excused absence.

RESOLUTION NO. 2025.02 – Amending the College Budget for an Increase from the State University of New York (SUNY) Workforce Development Training Grant Program for the Project Entitled “Creating an Environment of Continuous Improvement: Upgrading Skills, Eliminating Waste, Improving Communication Skills, and Upgrading Leadership Skills at Positive Promotions”

WHEREAS, the 2024–2025 College operating budget provided \$20,037, including indirect costs, from the State University of New York (SUNY) Workforce Development Training Grant Program, for a project entitled “Creating an Environment of Continuous Improvement: Upgrading Skills, Eliminating Waste, Improving Communication Skills, and Upgrading Leadership Skills at Positive Promotions,” for the period of October 21, 2024 through August 1, 2025, and

WHEREAS, the grant award includes an additional amount of \$8,981, including indirect costs, bringing the total amount of the grant award to \$29,018, and

WHEREAS, the additional employer cash share in the amount of \$898 will increase the total employer cash share of the project cost to \$2,902, and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to amend the 2024–2025 College operating budget in the amount of \$8,981 to provide for the total increase in the grant award, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the 2024–2025 College operating budget be amended to reflect an award increase in the amount of \$8,981 including indirect costs of \$1,496, from the SUNY Workforce Development Training Grant for the project entitled “Creating an Environment of Continuous Improvement: Upgrading Skills, Eliminating Waste, Improving Communication Skills, and Upgrading Leadership Skills at Positive Promotions”, and the College President, or his designee, is authorized and empowered to execute any necessary documentation, including an agreement with administering agency, in such form shall be approved by the College General Counsel.

Project Director: Arlene Jackson, College Assistant Dean, Continuing Education

Note: No full-time personnel
Matching funds from employer partner, Consortium

RESOLUTION NO. 2025.03 – Accepting a Grant Award from the State University of New York (SUNY) Workforce Development Grant for a Project Entitled, “Excellence in Microsoft Excel”

WHEREAS, Suffolk County Community College has received a grant award in the amount of \$9,639, from the State University of New York, SUNY Workforce Development Grant for a project entitled, “Excellence in Microsoft Excel,” for the period of November 11, 2024 through August 31, 2025, and

WHEREAS, this project will enable employees of the Suffolk County Water Authority to become more proficient in Excel, and

WHEREAS, matching funds in the amount of \$1,071 provided by the Suffolk County Water Authority will increase the total grant award to \$10,710, including indirect costs, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the matching funds, in the amount of \$1,071, provided by the Suffolk County Water Authority, be accepted for the operation of the Community College Workforce Development Training Program, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a grant award, in the amount of \$10,710, including indirect costs and the above-referenced matching funds, from the State University of New York, SUNY Workforce Development Grant for a project entitled, “Excellence in Microsoft Excel,” for

the period of November 11, 2024 through August 31, 2025, is hereby accepted, and the College President, or his designee, is authorized and empowered to execute any necessary documentation, including a contract with the administering agency, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel, and be if further

RESOLVED, that the 2024–2025 College operating budget be amended to reflect this grant award.

Project Director: Melanie Carsch, Assistant Director of Sustainability

Note: No full-time personnel
In-kind contribution

RESOLUTION NO. 2025.04 – Accepting a Grant from the State University of New York (SUNY) for an On-Campus Interfaith Space

WHEREAS, Suffolk County Community College has received a grant in the amount of \$6,000, from the State University of New York (SUNY) for an On-Campus Interfaith Space, for the period of September 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, and

WHEREAS, the grant supports an update of supplies, portable dividers, and equipment for campus meditation/interfaith spaces, and

WHEREAS, matching funds are not required, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that a grant, in the amount of \$6,000, from the State University of New York (SUNY), for an On-Campus Interfaith Space, for the period of September 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, is hereby accepted, and the College President, or his designee, is authorized and empowered to execute any necessary documentation, including a contract with the administering agency, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel, and be if further

RESOLVED, that the 2024–2025 College operating budget be amended to reflect this grant award.

Project Director: Lisa Hamilton, Director of Campus Activities & Student Leadership Development

RESOLUTION NO. 2025.05 – Accepting a Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for Community Project Funding

WHEREAS, Suffolk County Community College has received a grant in the amount of \$530,925 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for

Community Project Funding, for the period of August 13, 2024 through August 30, 2032, and

WHEREAS, the HUD Community Project Funding will provide resources to refurbish an existing physical plant space on the Eastern Campus to support Suffolk County Community College in expanding the local workforce training pipeline to supply skilled welders and CNC machine operators, and

WHEREAS, matching funds are not required, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that a grant, in the amount of \$530,925, from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for Community Project Funding, for the period of August 13, 2024 through August 30, 2032, is hereby accepted, and the College President, or his designee, is authorized and empowered to execute any necessary documentation, including a contract with the administering agency, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2024–2025 College operating budget be amended to reflect the applicable portion of this grant award.

Project Director: Edward T. Bonahue, Ph.D., College President

RESOLUTION NO. 2025.06 – Accepting a Grant from the State University of New York, SUNY Green Workforce Development Fund

WHEREAS, Suffolk County Community College has received a grant in the amount of \$299,103, from the State University of New York, SUNY Green Workforce Development Fund, for the period of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026, and

WHEREAS, the project will enable the College to adapt its existing non-credit HVAC program to incorporate green technologies and prepare students for success in increasing workforce demands within the Long Island region, and

WHEREAS, matching funds are not required, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that a grant, in the amount of \$299,103, from the State University of New York, SUNY Green Workforce Development Fund, for the period of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026, is hereby accepted, and the College President, or his designee, is authorized and empowered to execute any necessary documentation, including a contract with the administering agency, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2024–2025 College operating budget be amended to reflect the applicable portion of this grant award.

Project Director: Melanie Carsch, Assistant Director of Sustainability

RESOLUTION NO. 2025.07 – Awarding a Contract for Site Clearing for the Future Construction of the Automotive Technology Center on the Michael J. Grant Campus (CP 2203)

WHEREAS, the construction phase of Capital Project No. 2203 has been approved by Suffolk County and the State of New York for funding, and funds have been appropriated by the Suffolk County Legislature, and

WHEREAS, public bids for the site clearing work associated with the future Automotive Technology Center on the Michael J. Grant Campus were solicited and opened on January 8, 2025, and

WHEREAS, these bids were reviewed and the qualifications of the lowest responsible bidder were evaluated by the College and the design consultant of record, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the College President or his designee is authorized to enter into a contract with Darr Construction Equipment Corporation in an amount not to exceed \$87,413.70 for site clearing services in connection with the construction of the future Automotive Technology Center at the Michael J. Grant Campus, upon such terms and conditions as shall be approved by the College General Counsel.

Chair Coverdale called for the Committee reports.

Vice Chair Canary reported for the Governance Committee. The committee met on January 13th. General Counsel Ashley Pope reviewed a proposed policy, the Policy on Assessment of Academic Programs, AES Units, and Institutional Effectiveness. This policy is a new policy proposal developed jointly by the Office of Planning & Institutional Effectiveness and the Office of Academic Affairs to codify the institution's existing commitment to assessment across all areas of the institution. This BOT policy is relatively short and general, while the specifics of how the institution carries out its commitment to assessment would remain governed in large part by administration through an accompanying administrative procedure. Both the BOT policy and the administrative procedure have been reviewed and endorsed by President Bonahue and Cabinet. This is part of the ongoing policy work and preparation for the Middle States reaccreditation cycle. The Committee agreed that the policy should be brought forward to the whole Board at the February meeting for approval. GC Pope then reviewed the BOT 2024 Self-Evaluation results report provided by Scantron. There was 100% participation by the Trustees. The Committee discussed each section of the survey, areas that need improvement, areas of the survey that need to be updated or changed, future meeting schedules, and Trustee involvement in different committees. The Report

will be made available to all Trustees in the Teams portal so that all Trustees have the opportunity to review results and discuss feedback in February. The next Governance Committee meeting will be February 18th, agenda items will include: Continuation of Policy Updates.

Trustee Zarate stated that the Advocacy Committee did not meet, however she wanted to provide an update to her October report where she shared with the Board that she and Dr. Bonahue had been collaborating with New York Affirms Coalition to advocate for funding for the implementation of bilingual pipeline programs, especially at the College. The objective of this initiative was to establish foundational programs enabling students to earn bilingual certifications after continuing their education at partner institutions. They were informed about a surplus funding from the Governor's office being considered for bilingual pipeline programs in New York State with a focus specifically on Queens College and Buffalo University. Unfortunately, this excludes Long Island and Suffolk County Community College with 45,000 English language learners on Long Island, compared to 5,100 English language learners in Buffalo, they are continuing to advocate strongly for the College's inclusion in this funding. She noted many educational systems in Suffolk County face a critical need for bilingual educators, making this resource essential for the region. She encouraged the elected officials present to support this advocacy by urging the Governor's office to include Suffolk County Community College in this funding resource.

President Bonahue asked if Ben Zwirn and VP Munsch could give an update on the plans for the visit to Albany students. Mr. Zwirn said with the students are returning to campus on the 27th and so they haven't planned yet how many students will be going to Albany this year for the annual visit. They have had support from the Chair of the Education Committee, Legislator Bontempi and Legislator Mazzarella have indicated they would like to also make a trip to Albany this year in advocacy efforts for the College. He noted the State has reduced the contribution to community colleges in Suffolk by over \$5M over the last few years. The County Legislature and County Executive have been very supportive of the College, and have increased their contribution almost by the same amount. The State has an obligation under the state education law to fund a portion of the community colleges in New York, and they haven't met that since the day they passed the original legislation. It's now becoming dire. He added that if the Legislature wants to join the College on the advocacy trip to Albany, it would be most welcome. They are not going to Albany on SUNY Advocacy Day because it happens to land on the same day as the College's Professional Development Day, and so they will plan for later in February. VP Munsch added that the Directors of Campus Activities recognize the situation and in addition to bringing students up in the van, they will also have another car full of students. They anticipate between 15 and 20 students being able to join them in Albany.

Trustee Canary reported for the Facilities Committee. The annual meeting of the Physical Resources Subcommittee was held on January 7th. This past year funds were appropriated by Suffolk County for four projects, including the infrastructure project, the South Cottage Renovation, the design of the Caumsett Hall renovation and the new

Automotive Tech Center at the Grant Campus. The next phase of infrastructure funds has also been requested for \$10.3M, State financial support is expected to be received in May of 2025. The status of existing capital projects was discussed. At the STEM Center, the donated solar array is connected and waiting on Sun Nation to complete final linkup to the building. The design team has provided a roof access solution that is code compliant with costs pending from the contractor. The Dashboard remains an open item and is needed to monitor energy usage verifying the building is at Net Zero. There remain six open commissioning issues at the new Grant Plant Operations Building. Once resolved, change orders will be finalized and all remaining project funds will be used to provide asphalt paving. The next RFP to be prepared this quarter will be for the Workforce Development Center expansion. Eastern Campus Warehouse construction work has begun, but is delayed due to weather. The pre-engineered building is expected on site in March. The project should be completed by the end of the summer, bearing any further delays. Once the warehouse is operational, the Welding/CNC Shop project can then proceed. The associated Grant funding for the Welding/CNC Shop has been submitted for State match. The Eastern Central Energy plant boiler startup is expected next week. The rented temporary boiler is adequately heating the campus. Design is proceeding well for the Grant South Cottage renovation. Building code analysis indicates the addition of an elevator will not be required. The RFP Committee is meeting regularly to prepare this document and retain design services for Caumsett Hall partial renovation. Major infrastructure projects planned for 2025 and beyond include the Caumsett Hall, HVAC upgrade, the SFCU cooling Tower replacement and the Smithtown Science Building roof replacement. The SFCU roof replacement is expected to cost between \$5M to \$6M and will require design services. Other future infrastructure projects discussed included the removal of underground tanks, emergency generator and transfer switch replacements, storefront door replacements and exterior lighting upgrades.

The committee discussed several Capital needs beyond the existing programs. Expected repairs and replacements of major building and exterior systems is significant, and warrants a request in this cycle for additional infrastructure funding. A study was conducted to determine the feasibility of a ground solar array installation at the Grant campus. The existing open field on the northeast side of the campus loop road is approximately 15 acres with a flat topography and is mostly cleared. A 5-Megawatt solar array could be constructed on this site, producing enough power to supply over 72% of the Grant Campus demand, reducing utility costs by approximately \$1.3M per year. Overall project costs are estimated between \$12M and \$15M. The initial response from the Committee was favorable. There were some concerns expressed about ground maintenance and community response. Continued evaluation of this project will continue. Deans Rios and Reese also expressed interest in other sites on their respective campuses for such solar array installation. The Eastern Campus requested consideration of an HVAC Development Training Center. Additional space would be needed and could be created by expanding the existing Central Energy Plan. The Ammerman Campus also suggested evaluating the addition of more workforce development programs in Selden. Feasibility and potential layouts can be advanced over the next year. Security camera needs were discussed, existing cameras can be

repaired or replaced using infrastructure funding. New cameras could be purchased using the existing Security Notification Capital Project after the exterior public address system scope is completed. Dr. Bonahue inquired about projects for college-wide safety security and telecommunications. There have been discussions and submissions on potential opportunities in these areas, but they have not yet been developed into a consensus on complete project proposals that are eligible for capital funding. For the 2026 to 2028 Capital Program Submission, Dr. Bonahue approved requesting the next phase of the infrastructure project. This \$10.3M request will be split between 2026 and 2027. This submission must be completed by January 31st of this year for the County legislative schedule.

VP Araneo reported for the Foundation. The Foundation team remains focused on outreach to its priority prospects for the Education Without Limits campaign. Most recently the Foundation received a \$100,000 donation for the Jane F. Shearer School of Nursing for Program support. They are working with Dean Cheryl Shaffer to secure financial support from vendors, alumni, former and current staff for the 60th Anniversary Nurse Pinning Ceremony that will be celebrated on May 21st. Foundation team member Maggie Eng Salvaggio shared an update and materials on the new Automotive Technology Building at the December meeting of the Automotive Advisory Committee. Follow-up meetings with dealership owners to discuss naming and sponsorship have also begun and will continue throughout the year. The Foundation also secured a new \$5,000 automotive scholarship from Competition Automotive Group and disbursed \$11,000 in scholarships from Empire Automotive Group. The Foundation was named a beneficiary of a \$10,000 gift to the Emelene Abner Class of 2002 Scholarship, dedicated to support for students who are single parents. The Foundation is working with the office of Legal Affairs on the required steps to complete the transfer of assets from the Center for Social Justice and Human Understanding. Requested documents have been submitted to the State Attorney General to secure this formal approval. At its December meeting, the Foundation Board of Directors added a new member, Mr. Tom Lederer, who serves as Empire Automotive Group's Vice President for Human Resources and its Chief Information Officer. He has a history of raising funds for supporting the College's Automotive Department, including the creation of the Empire Automotive Group scholarship mentioned above that just awarded \$5,500 each to two of the College's current automotive technology students.

Student Trustee Hardy reported for the Association. The Association Board of Directors meeting was held on December 17, 2024. It began by welcoming the new Chair, Professor Sean Tvelia and Vice Chair, Ammerman Student Government President, Sammy DiPiazza, to their positions for the 2024-2025 year. Financials as of November 30th were reviewed and accepted. The campus child care centers are currently reflecting a deficit. However, Grant funds are not yet reflected. The Peconic Cafe currently has a \$5,600 deficit. This deficit reflects current sales and funding application from the Eastern campus Student Activity fee allocation. The Board remains concerned that the deficit in the Peconic cafe is not sustainable. There were discussions regarding the Child Care Center rate changes for Fall 2025. The current childcare rate does not reflect the Suffolk County market rate. As a result, the centers cannot collect the full

Grant funds available. The employee pay rates and minimum wage increased after the New Year. There will be proposals in regards to this, for the Board to vote on in the near future. The next meeting is going to focus on completing the last section of the Association bylaws.

Trustee Canary asked what was the status of the Southampton Head start situation, are they preparing meals at the Peconic Café still? GC Pope, replied that to her knowledge they are. They still have that use, and that was implemented notwithstanding the issues with the use of classroom space. The College still has the license agreement for meal preparation, however they have been informed that the use of classrooms space is not a possibility. The College has assisted them in trying to find alternatives.

Student Trustee Hardy provided the Student Trustee report. He reported he was reached out by Phi Theta Kappa's President, Nancy Horne. She and Phi Theta Kappa have some concerns about the current One login platform, and how for scholarships the portal, the link is titled Degree Works and it's very misleading. They're looking to change that to simply just "scholarships", because their concern is that it's decreasing awareness of student opportunities for scholarships. He reached out and told her they have his full support, and that's something they are going to be working on once students return to campus.

President Bonahue thanked Dominic and asked if he would forward the contact information for the PTK officer that expressed concern so he can follow up with them.

Chair Coverdale moved to the Chair's report. Chair Coverdale reported there was an Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) meeting on January 6th. They're still concerned about the outreach and attempts of the Chancellor to be what they consider overly involved in the affairs of trustee boards. She had a conversation with the Chancellor, it was very cordial and congenial. He wanted us to know that he has been advocating with the Governor for suggesting the importance of the development of an educated workforce that the community colleges provide to the state and suggested that she is committed to the furtherance of education. The Governor has proposed tuition-free community college for high demand career education, including nursing, teaching, technology and engineering. She asked the Chancellor how she might intend to pay for it, he said the details are to be worked out, but the State would provide an appropriation to handle that. The funds would come after all of the scholarship opportunities have been exhausted. The State would pay for tuition and books and fees, and the age range for students eligible would be 25 to 55. Chair Coverdale suggested that was helpful in terms of capturing some of the nontraditional students and took the opportunity to advocate on behalf of the College. She mentioned that community colleges provide education for our most vulnerable students who cannot afford to take advantage of higher education, and he should bring that to the Governor's attention. She said it was a cordial exchange, and believes the Chancellor was sincere in what he's doing and is attempting to be proactive in reaching out to all the trustee chairs. She reiterated what was said about advocacy, she hopes that all the trustees would be very

proactive in doing whatever they can to make known the plight that we are in and that floor funding is just not going to cut it.

Chair Coverdale moved to the President's report. President Bonahue began with an update on enrollment. The short Winter term brought in about an additional \$100,000 in revenue. Looking ahead to the Spring semester, they are seeing the same enrollment trend from last spring, which they are seeing more growth in the spring semesters than in the fall. As of today, eleven days before the start of the semester, enrollment is about 10% up. The College is close to achieving its enrollment growth goal, and will continue to watch this carefully over the next two weeks. As VP Gorton mentioned, when the new premium costs for EMHP are added into the operating budget, the College now projects the possibility that it could exceed the maximum use of fund balance that the Board has authorized.

However, because the enrollment numbers for Spring are looking positive, that additional revenue would offset the additional cost. The College is going to wait and take an in-depth look at enrollment before any request for formal action, such as requesting to revise the maximum use of fund balance. President Bonahue reviewed a handout that gave a look at the increase in EMHP premiums relative to the overall budget, and in comparison, with the changes in the operating aid from both Suffolk County and New York State. He pointed out that since 2020, in response to the enrollment decline the College has taken the steps needed to lower the total number of full-time employees by over 15%. The College has been able to take advantage of attrition, we have not done any lay-offs, but we try to be very conservative. Every position that comes open is a major conversation at the College about how to best fill that position, or whether we can leave it open.

He reviewed EMHP increases by year. In 2023, there was an increase of 12.5%. There was a slight decrease last year. However, for 2025, there is another increase of almost 13%, which is to say, it's been up 25% over the past three years. Even though we've reduced the headcount by 15%, the total cost of EMHP premiums has continued to rise from \$34M in 2021 and is projected to be over \$40M in 2025. He noted that even though the College has been able to reduce the size of the College appropriately in response to the long-term enrollment trend, this area of costs continues to mount for the College. He applauded the Board for always holding affordability at the center of all we do. We held tuition flat during COVID, but we have had tuition increases of 3% in the past two years. We are grateful at the College for the continued support of the County legislature. The County's contribution has continued to increase their funding, consistently supporting the operation of the College. Each 2% the College gets from the County amounts to an additional \$1M. In contrast the State continues to rely on floor funding, even though it continues to be an inflationary environment. The College would love to have more support from the State, but the State has not been able to increase their support for operations. In addition, earlier this week, he and VP Gorton met Deputy County Executive Christina Capabianco, and Director of Budget Trish Saunders. The

College covers the cost of EMHP healthcare premiums not only for its employees, but for its retirees. When a retiree passes away, an eligible dependent, an eligible spouse may also inherit their healthcare coverage. The County has discovered that part of those costs was being covered by the County rather than by the College. They were informed that those costs need to be transferred back to the College, which will be an additional \$1M. The additional cost is news, and the College will take that into consideration for the year ahead.

Trustee O'Connor asked if the County gets the Medicare offset on their side. President Bonahue and VP Gorton clarified that the cost, should be lower for a participant in the plan that is Medicare eligible. In those cases, the EMHP should be secondary. As a self-insured plan, they determine the rates based on the total cost for the prior year. If the College participated in a different plan, and had the ability to take advantage of lower rates, which is usually what you'd find when you have covered members who are Medicare primary. That is not how it works in the group plan that the College participates in.

The College will review the list they receive from the County to ensure it accuracy. President Bonahue said there are a variety of steps the College would like to propose to the committee that governs EMHP that may represent cost savings not only for the College, but for the County as well.

President Bonahue gave an update on the program sustainability work led by the Executive Deans and Dr. Rios as the Vice President for Academic Affairs. In the past twelve months the College has made changes in three academic programs. All in cases where the current and the historical enrollment trend as well as options for employment, have led the College to feel like it had to make changes. For many years, the College has had a program in journalism which offers both introductory classes and a wide range of elective classes. But over time, the field of journalism itself has been changing, and the College has been seeing both reduced student interest which translates to lower enrollment, and fewer employment opportunities in traditional areas of journalism. We've struggled to offer all of the courses in the program because they were often in the single digit enrollments. The College has made the decision to formally discontinue that program. However, we will continue to support the students who had been enrolled and will continue to offer introductory journalism classes that support students who want to transfer into a bachelor's degree. The full-time instructor who anchored that program will continue to teach communications classes.

Two other areas where the College has made changes are in Hospitality and Hotel Management, where the College was down to only six students enrolled and also had a retirement. We will also continue to support the students we have, and then formally discontinue the program. The Dietetic Technician program is one where Suffolk is the last community college in the State to try to maintain a two-year degree in a field that normally hires nutritionists with bachelor's degrees. Enrollments in the program are lower than what can sustain a healthy program. The College is transitioning to a

transfer-oriented program where students can pursue their interests in a transfer pathway.

In regards, to Academic Affairs, President Bonahue shared that yesterday, the College held a countywide meeting for superintendents, principals, guidance counselors, and involved with high school participation in the Beacon program. There were over 90 participants from districts throughout Suffolk County, along with Dr. Irene Rios, and Lisa Calla, and the Campus Deans. They presented updates on the Beacon Program and other early college opportunities and they described how the College is seeking to strengthen high school participation. Trustee Dolan also participated and did a great job speaking about the value proposition that the Beacon program brings to high school students and their families.

On March 11th we will have a visit from a Vice President, a staff member from the Middle States Commission for Higher Education. The Vice President would like to speak with some Board members during that time. The College will check to see if the Board's Executive Committee are able to participate. President Bonahue will also invite the reaccreditation co-chairs to present at the Board's February meeting, to give an overview of the Middle States accreditation process, especially of those areas that are specific to Board governance.

In regards to Advocacy, the Governor's State of the State address was this past week, and she described a plan to offer some free community college for nontraditional students who have never attended college to go into certain high need programs. He shared a handout that was being distributed by SUNY as the press piece designed to publicize the program. Dr. Bonahue is excited for community colleges to have a moment in the sun, and for the Governor to talk about the value that community colleges bring to workforce and economic development. We look forward to hearing more details regarding how this program would work.

The New York Community College Trustees (NYCCT) continue to request the improvement of floor funding for community colleges. They are renewing their request from last year of \$100M in base operational support for the entire community college system. Currently there is a focus on funding of programs, rather than on funding operations. For areas which are priorities in the Governor's plan – nursing, technology, manufacturing, air conditioning – these are all areas that are full for us, we would like to be able to offer more classes, but we need base operational support to offer more classes to accommodate increased student demand.

Chair Coverdale called for Roundtable: none.

Chair Coverdale provided another opportunity for public comments on matters pertaining to the College: there being none.

Chair Coverdale requested a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss proposed, pending, or current litigation, collective bargaining negotiations pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law, and to seek and or receive legal advice which is made confidential by law. Trustee Bost so moved, Trustee Canary seconded. The motion to enter into Executive Session was approved unanimously (7-0).

With no further business to be conducted after Executive Session, Chair Coverdale requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Bost so moved, Trustee Zarate seconded. The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously (7-0). The meeting adjourned at 10:16 a.m.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is February 20, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the Learning Resource Center on the Michael J. Grant Campus, Brentwood, New York.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin O'Connor
Secretary